Communication for Development

A glimpse at UNDP's practice

UNDP

Purpose of the Booklet

This booklet aims to illustrate communication for development (C4D) in practice across UNDP through selected case studies drawn from country and regional offices as well as headquarters. Often C4D elements are integrated within or underpin UNDP supported projects without a C4D approach being specifically acknowledged as part of the project strategy. These components strengthen projects primarily through enhanced participation of local people, greater responsiveness, accountability and transparency on the part of national and local government and improved delivery of public services. In the area of conflict prevention and recovery, strategic use of communication mechanisms is vital in bringing together fractured communities and former combatants to discuss differences and to seek solutions.

The booklet is not intended to be an exhaustive overview of UNDP's communication for development activities. Rather, it aims to present the scope and role of communication approaches in UNDP's projects and programmes designed to help meet national development goals

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Acronyms

A2I	Access to Information
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCA	Common Country Assessment
CCE	Community Capacity Enhancement
CREE	Consultative Commission for Education Reform
C4D	Communication for Development
DLDSP	Decentralisation and Local Development Support Programme
HRBA	Human Rights Based Approach
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
LGSP	Local Governance Support Programme
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
UNCDF	United Nations Capital Development Fund
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia

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Introduction

1.1. What is Communication for Development?

In 1996 through General Assembly Resolution 51/172 the UN adopted a formal definition of Communication for Development:

> *' Communication for development stresses the need to support two-way communication systems that enable dialogue and that allow communities to speak out, express their aspirations and concerns and participate in the decisions that relate to their development'.*

Since then other complementary definitions of C4D have been advanced by various development actors reflecting increased understanding of the role of C4D in development processes.[1] In 2006 the World Congress on Communication for Development defined C4D as:

> *'A social process based on dialogue using a broad range of tools and methods. It is also about seeking change at different levels including listening, building*

trust, sharing knowledge and skills, building policies, debating and learning for sustained and meaningful change'.

Put simply, Communication for Development (C4D) enables people, particularly the most disadvantaged in society, to participate in shaping decisions that affect their lives.

Communication for Development contrasts sharply with how Communication is often understood within the broader development arena where it is commonly associated with enhancing the public profile of organisations and advocating on specific programme areas.[2]

1.2. Communication for Development, participation and human development

Success in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the broader global development agenda of democratic governance and human development is dependent in large part on the extent to which national planning processes are informed by all sections of society. This means the involvement of the poor and more marginalised people as well as those who are better off. Participation processes determine significantly whose voices are heard and amplified and whose are muted. Broader and more equal participation reflecting society as a whole is considered a prerequisite for more responsive and democratic governance and sustainable development.[3]

Such participation can only take place if the information needs of all citizens are met and the voices of those most affected by policy decisions are heard. Access to clear, reliable and appropriate information is necessary for citizens to make informed decisions and to influence policy processes that affect their lives. Communication for development processes can therefore be seen as essential for effective participation and central to enhancing human development.

The rapid spread of information and communication technologies (ICTs) in recent years is transforming how people communicate and exchange information with each other and having a consequent impact on the dynamics of social, political and economic life. However, not all sections of society are able to take advantage of these opportunities. While the expansion of ICTs open up many opportunities for public participation, they can also serve to widen the gap between the poor and better off – between those with access and the skills to use the new technologies and those without[5] - thus limiting the potential to enhance human development.

Communication for development as a practice seeks to provide a framework through which the most appropriate actions can be taken to empower communities and to make policy makers more accountable. Sometimes ICT for development may be the best approach, while at other times the most effective solution may simply involve bringing people together for discussion without the use of technology.

1.3. Communication for Development and a human rights based approach to development (HRBA)

Communication for Development is anchored in a Human Rights Based Approach (HRBA) to Development which incorporates the core values of equity and empowerment and underpins the work of the UN Country Teams. C4D prioritizes the information and communication needs and interest of poor and vulnerable people and focuses on the role of the media, especially community media, in providing 'platforms' for disadvantaged men and women to 'understand and realize their rights'.[6]

Access to Information and Freedom of Expression are international human rights norms and are embedded in key Human Rights Instruments. Article 19 of both the UN Declaration on Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political rights (ICCPR) state the right to freedom of expression includes not only

freedom to 'impart information and ideas of all kinds', but also freedom to 'seek' and 'receive' them 'regardless of frontiers' and in whatever medium.[7]

Article 19 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights covers both concepts of information and communication and in doing so recognizes that people are generators, users and conduits of information. Article 22 of the ICCPR also provides for the right to freedom of association with others which enables collective analysis of information and can lead to collective action.

Some commentators suggest that information rights can be considered a fourth category of citizen rights, in addition to civil, political and social rights[8]

> *'…the information rights are most of all an element of citizenship. They concern first and foremost the social functioning of citizens, not only in relation to the public authorities, but also in their mutual relations and their relations with private legal entities. Information rights should be part of the civil rights chapter of constitutions, together with the other individual rights.[9]*

The 'supply' and 'demand' sides of information and communication mirror the core relationship at the heart of a Human Rights Based Approach to development - that between citizens as rights holders and government bodies and non-state entities as duty bearers.[10] Through the lens of Communication for Development, rights holders are citizens making demands on governments for accessible and understandable information on policies that shape their lives and exercising their right to access official information. Duty bearers are state actors at national and local levels who are required to be capable, responsive and accountable to all their citizens, to engage their constituents on issues of public interest, to ensure an enabling legislative, judicial and regulatory environment for community and public interest media and to provide relevant, up-to-date information to the public in a timely manner.

Under an HRBA to development Communication for Development should be seen as essential to addressing wide-ranging poverty and governance issues

experienced through powerlessness and lack of voice. Communication for Development should therefore be regarded as fundamental for all development interventions including HIV/AIDS, the environment (see the Aarhus Convention on Environmental Information)[11], crisis prevention and recovery and gender.

Enhancing women's participation in local development processes - Photo: UNDP/LIFE

UNDP's approach to Communication for Development

UNDP's approach to Communication for Development is embedded in its poverty reduction mandate which reflects a commitment to the Millennium Development Goals and the broader development, governance and human rights objectives represented by the Millennium Declaration.[12] UNDP recognises that one of the most serious problems facing many developing countries is the lack of inclusion and participation of poor people in national development processes. Their inclusion is hampered by, among other factors, a lack of information on issues that shape their lives made available in forms that are appropriate to them, together with a lack of capacity and opportunities to communicate their perspectives into public policy debate. UNDP acknowledges that in some countries citizens have become increasingly disillusioned with their governments as a result of a lack of responsiveness to the needs of the poor, perceived corruption and limited participation by ordinary citizens. The organisation believes that Communication for Development approaches can help transform this disillusionment into a more positive engagement in public policy development.

Capacity Development is a key instrument in achieving UNDP's development goals. Tangible and manageable elements of capacity development including access to information, inclusion, participation, equity and empowerment lie at the heart of Communication for Development. C4D approaches in each country reflect on the one hand, the particular needs of people seeking information, means to communicate and space to participate and on the other, government and other agencies supplying relevant information through appropriate channels.

For most people broadcast and print media are the main sources of information and news from outside the community. Media coverage reflects and affects every aspect of social, cultural, political and economic life.[13] Building the capacity of the media to generate the information required by all sections of society, especially by the poorest groups, through the most appropriate channels is a core element of C4D.

UNDP plays an important role in supporting communication mechanisms which allow poor women and men to participate in public dialogue and policy development as well as voice views on the performance of government institutions and government officials. From a programme or project perspective, UNDP seeks to address communication for development issues through the four pillars of its Access to Information (A2I) work: strengthening communication mechanisms available to vulnerable groups, developing media capacity, strengthening legal/regulatory environments and raising awareness of rights to official information.[14] Through these four pillars UNDP aims to:

i.   Raise the awareness of vulnerable and marginalized groups
ii.   Amplify the voices of vulnerable and marginalized groups
iii. Create safe space for public debate, dialogue and action[15]

Together with other UN organisations UNDP seeks greater integration of the communication for development dimension into both broader UN policy-making processes and the UN's strategic programming guidelines – the Common Country Assessment (CCA) and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF).

2.1. Raising awareness of vulnerable and marginalised groups

In order to participate in dialogue processes people need to be aware of issues and rights, have information about those issues and they need to have the capacity to express views and act on them. Awareness raising mechanisms operate at both individual and collective levels. Some focus on providing relevant information to, and raising the consciousness of, individuals while others aim to mobilize and support more collective efforts to voice concerns and make demands on the system.[16] Awareness raising can be regarded as a 'catalytic force' that ultimately can lead to changes in policy and behaviour of citizens and their government. The following case studies illustrate how raising awareness at both the individual and collective levels is an integral part of UNDP's broader development work.

Developing community media in Bangladesh. Photo: Adam Rogers, UNCDF

■ *Promoting ownership of sustainable conservation of wetlands, Pakistan*

- Generating local ownership through increased participation and local action
- Building partnerships between local communities, local authorities and implementing partners
- Using diverse media and communication to raise local and national awareness

Project rationale

Marine and fresh water wetlands cover about 10% of Pakistan's surface area and support 144 million people including about four million refugees from neighbouring countries. However, a number of factors have led to considerable degradation of these wetlands including a lack of understanding of their importance and their mis-management by local people as a result of pervasive poverty and the absence of alternative survival strategies. In addition to improving the technical capacities of government officials and local people the project aims to promote sustainable conservation by increasing national awareness of wetland conservation and involving the local population in the management of conservation efforts. The project covers four diverse eco-systems: Alpine wetland complex; Salt-Range wetlands; Central Indus wetlands and Makran Coastal wetlands.

How are C4D activities incorporated?

At the local level management plans are being implemented jointly with communities. These plans emphasise: an equitable sharing of natural resources; securing rights-of-access, especially for poor communities; diversifying livelihoods; improving the income earning potential of stakeholder communities and creating incentives for sustainable wetlands management. To promote inclusion and ownership of the conservation efforts in the wetlands local communities have mobilized into community based organizations. A Geographic Information System (GIS) that catalogues the bio-diversity in the wetlands and produces a socio-economic profile of the local communities is now operational.

This information has been shared with local people who through participatory planning approaches are now taking a leading role in developing strategies with project partners to improve their own economic conditions. These strategies include creating linkages with markets for the sale of local products and improving local tourism services. Local communities have become 'agents of change' and are actively involved in conservation efforts. For example, fishermen in the wetlands are using sonar technology to count dolphins.

At the national level an extensive communication and awareness raising component which emphasizes the importance of wetlands conservation is a central plank of the project. Activities include training of environmental journalists and active engagement with press clubs; information programmes on national radio, television and press, including a documentary in local languages; street theatre; outreach programmes to primary schools through a revised school curriculum that promotes conservation; the creation of a web-based Wetland Communication Network to enhance availability of information on conservation of wetlands. The success of these initiatives is evident in improved national media strategies including establishment of the Wetland Media Ambassador Awards and Wetlands Fiesta Week.

What difference do C4D activities make?

The involvement of local communities from the outset has helped build local ownership of wetlands conservation efforts, get 'buy-in' for diversified livelihood activities and encourage adoption of alternative energy technologies. Local communities have been pro-active in engaging local authorities and project partner agencies to improve management plans and demand new energy sources including wind turbines, bio-gas plants and solar energy. This has led the government to devolve implementation authority to the district and sub-district levels in order to facilitate better collaboration between local authorities and communities. Wetland conservation is also receiving greater priority at the national level as a result of increased discussion on national media and demand for information on conservation from various institutions and the general public.

UNDP Pakistan: Protection and Management of Pakistan Wetlands Project (www.pakistanwetlands.org)

■ *Using ICTs to improve public services, Bangladesh*

- Using ICT champions to stimulate change of policy and practice in key government agencies
- Building greater inclusion by creating telecentres in rural areas with emphasis on mobile telephony
- Use of telecentres by government departments and NGOs to provide services to communities

Project rationale

The government of Bangladesh is investing in ICTs to improve public services so that they become more inclusive by focusing on meeting the needs of all the country's citizens. This programme supports the alignment of the government's e-governance initiatives with national priorities by providing a range of technical and advisory services to the e-governance cell within the Prime Minister's Office.

How are C4D activities incorporated?

At the national level the programme supports several government agencies in the design and implementation of e-governance projects and e-services initiatives. A national e-Governance visioning process led ultimately to the development of an e-government framework for government departments. A key element of the programme is the placement of ICT Champions at senior policy-maker level in all major government agencies. The champions have become effective change agents enabling government policy and 53 'quick-win' e-services initiatives to be implemented quickly and effectively by slicing through red tape and reducing bureaucratic barriers. Many of these initiatives are designed to meet the specific needs of disadvantaged groups, especially women and illiterate people.

At grass roots level the programme supports local government in the establishment of rural tele-centres to provide various e-services to communities. Priority is given to mobile phone based service delivery as all villagers, including those with limited or no literacy skills, are considered able to use a mobile phone. The tele-centres are hosted

in the premises of local government institutions and managed through a community management model. Local people are charged a small fee to use the tele-centres to ensure their financial sustainability. The centre facilities are used by local government and NGOs to offer a range of services to local communities including:

1. Agricultural extension services provided by officials from the Ministry of Agriculture.
2. Job vacancy information, government forms and national examination results obtained and downloaded at the centre.
3. Dissemination of agricultural market information.
4. Health and family planning extension services provided by government health workers.
5. Dissemination by NGOs of legal aid information
6. Water usage and sanitation education provided by local NGOs

What difference have C4D activities made?
The programme's training and technical support, especially the ICT champions, helped government officials understand the importance of access to information in developing and implementing government policy as well as the need to develop e-services that meet the needs of local people. This resulted in their support for the development of the e-governance framework which sets out the long-term goals of the government in this area. At the local level it is reported that there has been a significant increase in rice production as a result of farmers obtaining best practice information through the centres. Linkages with markets have also improved as farmers access information about better priced markets. A key lesson from this programme is getting 'buy-in' from government agencies can result in innovative e-governance programmes which can lead to improved service delivery and underpin other development initiatives. The slogan which redefined e-governance in Bangladesh as 'Service at Doorsteps' was particularly effective in demonstrating to policy makers the value of ICTs for service delivery and paved the way for further reform in a non-threatening way.

UNDP Bangladesh: Access to Information and E-Government Programme (www.undp.org.bd)

■ *Improving access to information and services through the Chitalishta, Bulgaria*

- Use of traditional institutions to spearhead civic involvement in local development
- Identifying communities' information needs and priorities through village surveys
- Extending the range of information and technical services offered to communities

Project Rationale:

Bulgaria's unique community based education and cultural institution – the Chitalishta - were established in the middle of the 19th century. Since then the Chitalishta have remained an integral part of Bulgarian life. In the country's transition from authoritarian state to a democratic political system, the Chitalishta discovered a new role - as a catalyst for spearheading civic involvement in community development. Between July 2006 and July 2007 UNDP and the Chitalishta Development Foundation, a national NGO, jointly implemented a programme which aimed to provide relevant information and services to local people by developing the Chitalishta capacity to act as information intermediaries between small communities and institutions.

How were C4D activities incorporated?

After a competitive procedure which was overseen by independent rural development experts 80 village Chitalishta were selected and introduced to the programme. In addition to developing their computer, internet and database skills, interactive seminars were used to train the Chitalishte teams on a range of topics including 'Organization of information and planning of information' and 'How to become a successful information intermediary in rural areas'. All Chitalishta teams were trained on survey techniques. They then conducted audits of the information needs of residents in their villages.

In response to the findings from the information surveys 80 separate information guides were developed in a common format. Each of the Chitalishta teams assessed their local institutions - municipal, state and private bodies - and the services they offered to citizens. After successfully completing the programme all 80 Chitalishta began to offer local communities a range of information and technical services including information on administrative services provided by local institutions as well as computer/internet training. Support was also provided on areas as diverse as income generation and job creation for marginalized groups to human rights and the advancement of women.

During the project the Chitalishta provided over 170,000 different services, mostly free of charge. Some of these services were provided by invited external experts and partners. General information services were available to everyone. However, there was a greater demand for technical information and support services which were used primarily by farmers, students, local businesses and the unemployed. The Chitalishte teams acted as information intermediaries between local people and over 400 institutions and organizations.

What difference have C4D activities made?

By using the Chitaliste's services local people found that they were not only able to access various types of information and documents held by state and municipal administrative bodies more easily but also save both time and money in doing so. New activities attracted additional financial resources to the Chitalishta which enhanced their sustainability. In addition to its information intermediary role the Chitalishte model, with its informal network and intensive internal communication, has contributed to strengthening local democracy and has proved to be one of the programme's greatest assets. The Chitalista constantly improved their effectiveness by borrowing ideas and experiences from their colleagues. The popularity of the services led to other Chitalista replicating the model in 35 villages outside the programme. The information intermediary role was promoted in a national information campaign "Panorama of Chitalishte Ideas". The programme's results were used to illustrate to the government and other national partners that the Chitalishte model represented an effective approach to rural development.

UNDP Bulgaria: (www.undp.bg)

■ *Using communication to support decentralization, Timor Leste*

- Promoting transparency and accountability through improved communication
- Building the media's knowledge of the decentralisation process
- Raising local awareness though improving communication capacities of local authorities

Project Rationale:
UNDP and the UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) are supporting the Timor Leste government's decentralisation process. An evaluation of a 3 year pilot project identified the need to enhance local people's awareness of and participation in the governance system if the full benefits of decentralisation were to be realized. In response to these findings the Local Governance Support Programme (LGSP) was expanded in 2007 to include dedicated Communication for Development elements.

How were C4D components incorporated?
The LGSP has two key Communication for Development pillars - capacity development and raising awareness of the decentralisation process. The first pillar, capacity development includes three distinct elements.

(i) Developing the Government's public relations capacity. By establishing a communications unit within the Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management the government indicated a willingness to use communication tools to enhance transparency and accountability. The Ministry's communication strategy includes production of a range of printed and broadcast materials, training to enhance civil servants' outreach capacity and exploring approaches to make official information more accessible to the public. By establishing a website, the Ministry also improved internal coordination.

(ii) Strengthening links to the media. Prior to the development of a communications strategy, the Ministry's links to the media were limited and ad hoc. A few simple steps allowed a more systematic approach to the media including developing a

media contact list, issuing regular press releases and encouraging the media to contact government officials to clarify issues. A workshop for media representatives and government officials to discuss issues relating to the decentralisation process was organised by the Communications Unit. Together these measures have helped to strengthen the relationship and trust between the government and media and enhanced the latter's confidence and ability to report on major national issues.

(iii) Training for local authorities. To facilitate the transfer of responsibilities from central to local level local assembly officials received training on consultation with local communities, dissemination of information about assembly activities and effective engagement with local media.

The raising awareness pillar is essentially an outreach campaign which aims to raise local communities' awareness of the government's plans for decentralisation and local government.

To date the campaign has focused on informing and consulting people on draft local government legislation. Following approval of legislation, the outreach campaign will include education on the future structure and functions of local government.

What difference have C4D activities made?
By developing a communications strategy the Ministry has already begun to employ empowering messages that encourage active community participation and promote an inclusive image of governance. The communications strategy has increased people's awareness of planned reforms and their possible impact on central government, local authorities and civil society. The strategy has increased media coverage and identified decentralisation as a national priority. This increased awareness has contributed to an enhanced political dialogue on the draft local government legislation. Developing and communicating basic messages has helped to refine the major themes of the decentralization process and streamline communications to reinforce these concepts.

UNCDF Timor-Leste: (www.uncdf.org/english/countries/timor_leste/index.php)
The Ministry of State Administration and Territorial Management:
(www.estatal.gov.tl)

■ *Promoting participatory local governance, Yemen*

- Generating local ownership of local authority planning and budgeting
- Building strong links between local communities and local authorities
- Improving communication across local government structures

Project rationale
UNDP in partnership with UNCDF has been supporting the development of the local authority system in Yemen since 2004. One of the main aims of the Decentralisation and Local Development Support Programme (DLDSP) is to help local authorities deliver public services in a more responsive and accountable way and encourage greater involvement of local communities in the selection and prioritisation of these services.

How are C4D activities incorporated?
The programme is active at both national and local levels. At the national level, as part of the local government reform process, the DLDSP provided the Ministry of Local Administration with a range of technical support in the formulation of policy and regulatory frameworks which set the parameters for the Local Governance Strategy approved in 2008.

At the local level the DLDSP developed a Public Expenditure Management (PEM) approach which has been piloted in 48 districts across eight Governorates. Participatory methods which encourage people to voice their aspirations and priorities and engage actively in local planning processes lie at the heart of the PEM approach. Along with elected local councillors and key local government administrative and executive staff local authorities are required to include representatives of local NGOs/CBOs in the team responsible for drafting the Local Development Plan, the district budget and investment programme.

As part of the planning and budgeting process the drafting team is divided into small subgroups which visit different uzlas (a district subdivision). The subgroups hold discussions with local people in a variety of forums: traditional channels such

as meetings facilitated by local sheikhs or tribal leaders; and discussions with clients at public service delivery points, e.g. at the local clinics and water or irrigation points. These discussions allow subgroup members to verify the quality of public services and identify and prioritise local needs. During the consultations at uzla level efforts are made to seek the views and priorities of the most vulnerable people. In some uzlas, in order to get the views of women who are unable to participate in public meetings, NGO representatives on the subgroups have either visited them at home or in settings where women feel comfortable.

What difference do C4D activities make?

Experiences from the PEM pilots informed the development of the Government's Local Governance Strategy. As a result of participating in planning processes local communities now have greater expectations of their local authorities and increasingly are holding the latter to account for their decisions. NGO representatives regularly attend local council meetings to review local plans and budgets. Although they do not have a formal vote they often air concerns that are eventually addressed in the plan and budget. Budgetary support to local authorities is now earmarked for projects that respond directly to the concerns and priorities voiced by local communities. There is some evidence that financial resources are being channelled more effectively towards meeting local needs.

Communication has improved not only between citizens and local authorities but also across local government. Working jointly on outreach activities has resulted in different local government departments communicating more effectively. Due to more systematic and regular interaction communication between districts and governorates has also improved significantly and this has contributed to the increased efficiency and effectiveness of the local authority system as a whole.

Local Development (Yemen): Programme Profile, on UNCDF's website: (www.uncdf.org/english/countries/yemen/index.php)
Or DSDLP Fact Sheet, on UNDP Yemen website: (www.undp.org.ye/governance_fact4.php)

2.2. Amplifying the voices of vulnerable and marginalised people

UNDP recognises the need to support initiatives that ensure the concerns and priorities of people at the margins of political and social power structures are heard and taken into account by policy makers. The media, particularly radio, has a key role to play in this process as in many countries it is the medium that poor people can access most easily, 'The media is an educator and a key information source that can help deliver the Millennium Development Goals, promote transparent governance and through balanced reporting, help prevent conflicts. The wide benefits from a plural media mean it acts as a public good in development'.[17] The following case studies illustrate how UNDP supports the media to deliver a range of development and governance programmes on issues of public interest.

Representative Haja Fata Siryon, of Bomi County, Liberia, responding to questions from her constituents on UNMIL Radio. Photo: Sayor Whatoson/UNMIL Radio

■ *Improving access to justice for poor and disadvantaged people, India*

- Raising awareness of people's right to information
- Building local people's confidence and capacity to demand information from government
- Holding national and local government to account for policies through community action.

Rationale

Information is critical to empowerment and obtaining justice. People often do not avail themselves of laws, rights, and government services because they simply do not know about them. Information is particularly important to individuals navigating the legal system. Judicial processes can be arcane and ordinary citizens may have difficulty understanding their rights, locating legal aid, and navigating court procedures. Information is also important for achieving justice in a wider sense where justice may not involve courtroom proceedings but may simply entail ensuring that one's government delivers on its promises. In this regard information is critical for government to be held publicly accountable.

How were C4D activities incorporated?

In its efforts to improve access to justice for poor people in India, UNDP has supported several interrelated initiatives designed to enhance access to information. These include the following projects:

(i) Contributing to strengthening legal and institutional frameworks for the right to information; including facilitating the framing of model rules and regulations to implement new right to information legislation.

(ii) Building the capacity of public officials and civil society to support the roll-out and implementation of the legislation; including the production of manuals, guidebooks, a self- learning module and other information material as well as

translations of the Act and the staging of various road shows and live performances to raise the awareness of citizens.

(iii) Building the capacity of communities to request information and government officials to supply it; including support to an NGO-led right to information campaign in ten low-income settlements of urban Delhi. The campaign sought to develop the capacity of local people to seek information on, and demand better access to, public services and government schemes. The campaign created a pool of trainers, identified change agents from within the communities, linked communities to other groups working in similar areas and 'sensitised' government officials to people's need for information.

(iv) Supporting civil society groups in promoting citizens' access to information: providing support to NGOs in Delhi and Rajasthan in organizing public hearings where local people review government information and demand accountability from government officials.

(v) Establishing computer kiosks at pilot sites for providing public information; enabling citizens to access information about laws and public services and also use the internet to file grievances.

(vi) Building the capacity of the media to facilitate access to information and monitor the achievement of development goals: helping to develop the capacity of the media at national and provincial level to use the provisions of the Right to Information Act to promote greater transparency and accountability on the part of government. The media have also been encouraged to report on how people are using right to information legislation to demand greater accountability from government. At the same time the programme has supported the media to use the right to information legislation to gain access to information on development issues (such as the progress made towards the achievement of national goals and the MDGs) and report on these to the public.

(vii) Advocating for a strengthened community radio policy: together with UNESCO supporting the Government to expand its policy beyond campus radio to include community based organizations.

What difference have C4D activities made?

The development of model rules for the right to information legislation provided a vital input at a critical time when the government was framing rules under the Right to Information Act. Workshops to build the capacity of local government officials to respond to requests for information highlighted the need for political will in order for the legislation to be implemented effectively. Public hearings are an effective way of mobilizing community members to demand accountability from elected officials and civil servants. This also promotes participation of the poor in local governance. A number of important lessons can be drawn from the various initiatives: training government officials on access to information is essential not just in imparting knowledge but in overcoming resistance to new ideas and duties; and public hearings are an effective means of demanding accountability but they require a high level of preparation and technical expertise in managing conflict.

UNDP India Website: (www.undp.org.in/index.php?option=com_content& view=article&id=475&Itemid=665)

■ *Using media and communication to encourage an informed electorate, Kenya*

- Use of diverse media to raise local and national awareness and encourage debate
- Providing a voice for ordinary people to engage in the electoral process
- Demanding greater accountability from government and political parties

Project rationale

The 2007 Electoral Assistance Programme in Kenya supported an innovative set of separate and complementary media and voter education activities. These were designed to encourage the development of an informed electorate which is aware of its rights, understands political processes and is able to make leadership choices, taking into account policy issues.

How were C4D activities incorporated?

Informed by extensive research, a harmonized media strategy was developed with partner institutions including the Kenyan National Commission on Human Rights and the Media Council. The strategy had a clear focus not only on voter education and the electoral process itself, but the broader issues-based context in which elections are held. Media professionals were trained to focus on issues in a fair and impartial way.

Media monitoring was a central plank of the programme. Media monitoring teams reported back every two weeks to a public forum on (i) performance and compliance with codes of conduct, (ii) raising issues of ethnically based hate speech and (iii) the impact of politically owned media in contributing to hatred and unrest.

Over four hundred interactive and other television and radio programmes were produced. Training on content was provided to television presenters and radio hosts and moderators including vernacular radio station hosts. One of the high profile activities was the *Louis Oteieno Live on the Road Show* broadcast live

from a different city each week. This concept was a first for Kenya and provided a public forum in which communities had their own local issues aired nationally with community representatives engaging with politicians and social and political commentators. Weekly radio shows were broadcast on eleven national and local language stations covering a different theme each week, with guests from different political parties, civil society and community leaders. Radio journalists from seven different radio stations were trained to produce voter education radio documentaries using the voter educators as a source. A total of 265 documentaries were broadcast on the various national and vernacular language radio stations.

What difference did C4D activities make?

The 2007 elections were marred by politically motivated post-election violence prompted by a public outcry at perceived manipulation of election results. However, this programme had a number of positive outcomes. Its media monitoring activities highlighted the importance of paying attention to the media and illustrated clearly how media coverage can be captured by malign interests. The programme provided a voice for diverse interests, equitable access to political parties and encouraged debate between candidates and constituents. Importantly, it also explored new communication mechanisms outside the traditional mainstream channels.

In some ways the programme can be said to have acted as a referendum. Many ordinary people used the platform as a scorecard to gauge the performance of the government and their elected leaders. A deliberate focus on the interests of marginalised groups ensured that their specific concerns were mainstreamed in the discourse. There were clear lessons gained from this experience for future election projects. One key lesson is that extending media analysis and monitoring into the post election phase should become standard practice in fragile political contexts. More broadly, a harmonized media campaign which enables local communities to engage in electoral processes in a meaningful way is extremely effective in terms of its outreach and impact.

UNDP Kenya: (www.ke.undp.org/Mediaandelections.htm)

◼ *Using a radio phone-in programme to engage people in governance processes, Liberia*

• Raising awareness of reconstruction and development processes at the local level
• Generating interest and promoting dialogue within communities and between communities and government officials on key governance issues
• Increasing accountability and transparency of elected officials

Project Rationale

The 2005 elections in Liberia marked the beginning of the reconstruction and rebuilding process after two decades of political unrest and armed conflict. UNDP, through its Democracy and Civic Education Empowerment Grant, aims to support high impact civic empowerment programmes that provide the public with information on reform processes and encourage their participation in reconstruction and development programmes. It also aims to clarify the roles and responsibilities of all branches of the government in these processes.

How are C4D activities incorporated?

Since 2006 UNDP has supported Know Your Law Makers, a radio phone-in programme on the official radio station of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). The programme is broadcast twice a month and is part of a regular weekly discussion and phone-in programme called Palava Hut. Palava Huts are small open huts traditionally used for discussions in local communities.

The programme's objective is to involve local people in governance processes by facilitating a constructive dialogue between legislators and the public. This programme provides a vital opportunity for legislators to address their constituents directly as most of the infrastructure was destroyed during the war and large parts of the country are inaccessible during the rainy season. UNDP supports the Centre for Promotion of Democracy, a local NGO, to inform local communities about the Know Your Law Makers radio phone-in programme. It mobilizes local communities, organizes radio listening groups and facilitates the use of mobile phones for the

listening groups to call in. Radio-listening groups meet in existing communal structures. The NGO also works closely with UNMIL Radio and the show's presenter to encourage legislators to participate in the show and discuss their constituents' pressing development issues in Liberian English.

The first part of the programme is a discussion between the legislator and the presenter after which the phone lines are opened up for the public to call and ask questions directly to their legislators. Crucially, the NGO also facilitates dialogue on the issues discussed on the radio among the members of the listening groups to encourage community response to some of the urgent reconstruction issues. Through this forum, community members, particularly young people, are encouraged to engage fully in governance processes that are being re-established in Liberia. In addition, comments and suggestions from the public are also sent to the radio show producers.

UNMIL radio has wide coverage in Liberia and the programme is broadcast nation-wide using its network of community based radio stations. The programme is also dubbed into local languages and rebroadcast on community radios to inform people of key governance issues in the country as well as familiarize them with the work of their legislators and the government at large.

What difference have C4D activities made?
The radio programme, supported by the mobilization activities, plays a key role in informing the public about the work of their elected officials and has created a forum for discussions between legislators and the public. It has also increased dialogue within local communities on issues directly affecting their wellbeing. The programme's success has resulted in legislators approaching UNMIL requesting to participate on the show. They recognise that the programme represents the most direct and economical means to reach their constituents without travelling from the capital. The format of this programme has been replicated by other radio stations including one where on a regular basis the President addresses the nation on a specific issue through a radio phone-in. The programme acknowledges the need for

better targeting of women to enable them to engage more actively in governance issues. In the next phase it plans to establish more women's listening groups that focus on building women's leadership capacity for effective participation in the 2011 election.

UNDP Liberia: (www.lr.undp.org)

■ *Using communication and information audits to identify and address gaps in the participation of marginalized groups in development processes, Mozambique*

- Piloting communication for empowerment methodology to identify marginalized groups' information and communication needs
- Creating awareness among policy makers and local officials of the importance of addressing information and communication needs identified through the audits
- Developing initiatives to address the gaps and enhance participation of the marginalized in national development processes and achieve the MDGs

Project Rationale
The rapidly evolving information and communication sector has led to growing information gaps between various sections of society, limiting the participation of vulnerable and marginalized groups in national development processes. Understanding the nature of the information gaps of various sections of society is crucial for enhancing participation, a prerequisite for more responsive and democratic governance and sustainable development. To identify and effectively respond to the challenge of integrating information and communication strategies into UNDP's governance programming, the UNDP Oslo Governance Centre produced the Communication for Empowerment (C4E) Practical Guidance Note in 2006, which proposed methodologies and practical tools for developing people centred information and communication strategies. Mozambique was one of five pilot countries selected for an UNDEF-funded project to operationalize the C4E methodology and tool within national contexts, as it met the selection criteria including weak information and communication systems.

How were C4D activities incorporated?
Information and communication audits consist of six core elements at the national level: (i) desk study, (ii) formation of a national consortium of stakeholders (iii) research on information and communication needs at the local level (iv) research

findings documented in a 'national' report (v) a launch of the report at national level and (vi) proposals developed to meet identified challenges.

In Mozambique, information and communication audits were conducted by a local research team in three districts. The districts were chosen to ensure there was a range in terms of (i) geographical location (ii) distance from urban centres (iii) donor activity and (iv) the presence of community radio stations. While all three districts had access to some form of media, one (Mandlakazi) had no local media. The research team conducted extensive individual and groups interviews of community members, civil society representatives, government officials and local media representatives, using the tools adapted from the C4E guidance note.

Key findings to emerge from the research included:

- Community radio is seen as a critical resource for the provision of necessary local information and for providing communities with a voice.
- National public radio plays a central role in providing information primarily by (i) filling information gaps in areas without community radio and (ii) providing national and international information through Portuguese language programmes.
- Community radio needs a range of support, including a clear legal framework, to ensure sustainability of both community radio structures and quality of programme content.

What difference have C4D activities made?

The results of the information and communication audit and the usefulness of the C4E tool to assess the information and communication needs of vulnerable and marginalized people have influenced the development of key UNDP and joint UN programmes in Mozambique. For example, as a part of overall efforts to aid participatory decentralized planning processes, UNDP and UNESCO will be supporting a community radio programme on local economic development. The objective of this programme is to inform local communities about the implications

of proposed economic development activities, to enable their informed participation in planning processes.

The UN in Mozambique has established a platform for C4E consisting of all relevant UN agencies and civil society organizations to advocate for the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized people in local development processes. The UN will also be implementing a joint programme on Civil Society and C4E to strengthen civil society capacity to represent all sections of the population and critically engage them in governance processes.

UNDP/Oslo Governance Centre: www.undp.org/oslocentre for the Mozambique information and communication audit report

2.3. Creating safe space for public debate, dialogue and action

A number of mechanisms have long been used to foster public dialogue and debate. For communication for development purposes such debate must centre on issues which are important to communities. Deliberate efforts must be made to find appropriate forums which place those most affected by an issue at the heart of the debate.[18] The following case studies illustrate how UNDP supports various interactive processes that move beyond canvassing opinion and expand the space for public involvement in making and shaping interventions in policy and practice.

Mayan teachers, community leaders and the Minister of Education engaged in a dialogue to develop a new education policy. Photo: UNDP Guatemala

◼ *Using a Community Conversation approach to strengthen community responses to HIV/AIDS*

• Use of participatory approaches to raise awareness of HIV/AIDS
• Generating local ownership of responses to HIV/AIDS
• Building responsiveness of local authorities

Approach Rational:

The deepening HIV/AIDS epidemic and the need for a structured response led UNDP to adopt the Community Capacity Enhancement (CCE) programme in 2001. The CCE, using an interactive dialogue methodology known as 'Community Conversations', raises awareness about HIV/AIDS and helps the community to generate insights on the underlying factors fuelling the spread of HIV in the community.

How is this approach used in HIV/AIDs programming?

The Community Conversation methodology translates the principle of participation into development practice by creating opportunities for a broad cross section of the community including women and men, old and young to understand, discuss, decide and act on issues affecting their lives. These conversations use participatory methodologies such as storytelling, active listening and strategic questioning in order to identify shared concerns and observe, question, explore and make decisions together. They act as catalysts to transform people's thinking and help to generate and transfer knowledge at country, regional, and international levels. Once begun, the process of knowledge transfer becomes self-propagating from community to community as well as among an ever-growing pool of skilled implementers and facilitators. Bringing together different generations of women and men ensures that a wide range of perspectives are taken into account when decisions are made.

Community conversations are guided by trained local facilitators with a substantive knowledge of the local environment. Through the process of inclusive interaction,

collective or social learning occurs, power relations shift, ownership and responsibility for change is strengthened, changes are initiated and local capacities and resources are mobilized. An environment is fostered, in which all those concerned work together, based on the recognition that people have valuable capacities, perspectives and knowledge, as well as an interest in change. These are validated, built upon and strengthened through these community meetings.

In Burkina Faso UNDP supports PAMAC, the national network of people living with HIV/AIDS, to reach out to communities across the country and help local groups within those communities manage HIV programmes. Using the Community Conversation approach the project supports 142 community organizations and has trained more than 400 representatives to raise awareness on voluntary counselling and testing, prevention, access to communal care, and organizational management. Over 350,000 people have benefited from these activities. In Northern Thailand, a holistic community response was developed to provide support and care for children and adults affected by HIV. A locally appropriate faith-based response to HIV/AIDS was also developed and those affected were mobilized to take the leadership in prevention, care and support of others.

What difference does this approach make?

In countries where community conversations have been used as a primary method to involve local communities there has been a strong positive response after the science and epidemiology of HIV/AIDS was shared and understood. Communities have begun to recognize that values and actions need to change in order to combat HIV/AIDS and halt the spread of the disease. In Ethiopia, encouraged by the Community Conversation approach, Islamic religious leaders from a community in Alaba set an example for local people by leading over 130 men to be tested for HIV/AIDS.

Community Conversations have provided a forum for people to think through the repercussions of specific actions and practices - particularly how individual values and behaviours, as well as collective socio-cultural practices, affect people's lives.

They have created an invaluable space for mutual learning and resulted in new perspectives on what needs to be done. Community Conversations have also provided important opportunities for local authorities to listen to people's concerns and take these into account in planning and implementation processes. In this way, the approach has helped bridge the gap between local governments and their constituents.

UNDP: (www.undp.org/hiv/docs/prog_guides/cce_handbook.pdf)

■ *Using democratic dialogue to build a new joint vision for education, Guatemala*

- Generating widespread ownership of education policy through involvement of diverse groups at local and national levels
- Building confidence and trust among a wide range of stakeholders
- Contributing to strengthening democratic processes

Project rationale

Universal primary education is a Millennium Development Goal and it plays an especially crucial role in the reconstruction of post-conflict societies. In the 1996 Peace Accords, Guatemala prioritized reform of the education system as part of developing a bilingual and intercultural society and preparing the new generation to meet the challenges of a globalized world. Education reform began in 1997 with the establishment of the Consultative Commission for Education Reform (CCRE) but came to a halt due to mistrust and confrontation among the various actors involved in education. From August 2004 to July 2005, UNDP supported Project Visión Educación to implement a broad multi-stakeholder dialogue in order to build together a new vision for education in Guatemala; a vision that would be the reference point and inspiration for addressing present and future challenges to education in the country.

How were C4D activities incorporated?

The Ministry of Education invited a Promoter Group, made up of seven highly influential Guatemalans representing diverse sectors and schools of thought, to take the lead in convening a national dialogue on education using the Democratic Dialogue approach. This methodology had been used successfully to develop a common National Vision for Guatemala and to deal with complex issues in public policy development and citizenship building. Throughout the three phases of the education dialogue process – preparatory, dialogue, and consolidation of results– the basic principles of democratic dialogue were adhered to: providing voice to voiceless sectors; creating a safe space for all actors to express their views;

promoting national ownership; encouraging creativity and openness to change and placing a strong emphasis on transforming relations to build a new Guatemala.

The dialogue process was used as an instrument to build trust, tolerance and create a shared understanding of the national education reality. The dialogue team, known as the Constructor Group, worked for 10 months across four strategic areas of the Guatemalan education system: bilingual intercultural education, management, science and technology, and financing. The Constructor Group's membership was drawn from across civil society and included representatives from the Ministry of Education, the Congress and CCRE as well as indigenous and traditional leaders. The process entailed four 3 day workshops, three 'learning journeys' and twenty meetings of working committees which followed up on agreements reached in the workshops and addressed strategic aspects of the vision. A variety of methodologies were used including strategic planning by scenarios as well as open spaces and conversation circles. This dialogue process resulted in the preparation of the Vision for Education 2025 and the Guidelines for the Education Policy 2005-2008.

What difference did C4D activities make?
The dialogue process introduced a new management model for the education sector and took account of demands from the younger generation for more importance to be given to science and technology in the new curriculum. It also encouraged interculturalism as a state policy and promoted a culture of dialogue, equity in education coverage and strong institutions for sustaining education reform.

The dialogue approach also contributed to strengthening democratic processes. A crucial part of the process was developing relationships through building and maintaining communication bridges among the dialogue group in order to acknowledge the past, understand the present and visualize a better future. These relationships and networks have survived beyond the development of the education vision. The Visión Educación project can be seen as successful at many levels – including enabling poorer and marginalized people to influence

policy. The process helped reach consensus on realistic goals and promoted national ownership of policies. One of the key lessons learnt was the importance of managing expectations by openly discussing the realities of adopting and implementing such initiatives.

UNDP Democratic Dialogue Project: Visión Educación process: (www.democraticdialoguenetwork.org/experiences/process/view. pl?process_id=2)

■ *Letting people's voices be heard, Uzbekistan*

- *Building partnerships between local communities, local authorities and implementing partners*
- *Generating local ownership through collective action by communities*
- *Promoting more responsive planning by local government*

Project rationale

As part of the decentralization process in Uzbekistan local government and traditional community organizations are being asked increasingly by central government to mobilize local resources to maintain basic infrastructures - a task for which they have as yet limited capacity and experience. This can compromise access to and delivery of basic services in rural areas and have a negative affect on local people's livelihoods. As a result in some regions there is a risk that social, economic and gender inequalities may increase. The European Unions's *Enhancement of Living Standards* (ELS) programme and the *Area Based Development* (ABD) programme supported by UNDP are twin programmes which together aim to address these problems in 5 regions as part of broader initiatives designed to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

How are C4D activities incorporated?

Pioneering social mobilization approaches which prioritise the rehabilitation of social infrastructures, and which are co-financed by communities, are used to help local communities identify and agree on how to overcome their main problems. Community mobilisation helps develop self reliance and a problem-solving attitude which all communities consider important for their development but which they often lack. The programme utilizes the time honoured practice of "hashar" which fosters a sense of local ownership and helps save money. Hashar calls for villagers to work voluntarily for the benefit of the whole community. The programme taps into this tradition and mobilizes local people to contribute their labour, assets and equipment to rehabilitate schools or medical centres, lay gas pipes or install water pumps.

Information and Resource Centres have been set up and have become the hub of the programme's participatory approach to local development. The centres avoid "a one size fit all" approach and use tailored methodologies to help each community identify problems and develop its own solutions. The centres support communities to rehabilitate their infrastructures and help farmers expand their farm enterprises by providing credit for collective purchasing, production and marketing arrangements. They do so by bringing together mid-level local government officials, community based practitioners, farmers, women and young people so they can exchange information, discuss and organize training on a range of issues (e.g.HIV/AIDS); replicate successful ideas (e.g. community co-financing of water) and benefit from the programme's experience in rural development. As a result of these activities 260,000 people are now able to access clean piped water, over 2,000 people have benefited from microcredit worth USD $500,000 and over 200 farmers in 11 cooperatives have been trained in agricultural and food production, micro irrigation, as well as administration and business management.

What difference do C4D activities make?

The communities are better informed and have gained confidence to speak out, express their hopes and concerns and participate in important decisions that affect their wellbeing. They strongly believe that they are making a better life for themselves and that they own the various development efforts. For their part, local authorities, as well as having stronger planning capacity, now have an improved understanding of, and are more responsive to, local concerns. A better relationship between local government bodies and communities has meant a greater willingness to work together to address and solve a range of development problems and to share the costs of renewing infrastructure. The effectiveness of the Centres has recently led to the local authorities channeling funding on a more permanent basis to communities.

UNDP Uzbekistan: (www.undp.uz)
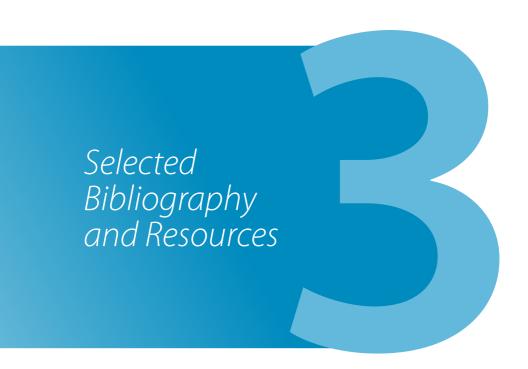Area Based Development Programme: (www.abd.uz)
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